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SIGHT AND SOUND

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ARTICLES: LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA
THE FIRST TEN YEARS
PUPIL APPRAISAL
ART DIRECTION
TELEVISION AND FILM

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6^D.

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Oh Democracy . . . We are fond of saying that we are fighting this war because we believe in the inalienable right of a people to formulate its own ideas instead of accepting them blindly from an Autocrat. Actually we are fighting Hitler not so much because he has chosen to school and dragoon his people into complete submission of thought and reason, as because we feel that he is employing his great powers to subversive ends. We seek to demonstrate, by the arbitrament of armed force, that he is misguided.

But, having shown him how not to do it, we must be equipped (and prepared) to show him how it should be done. If we fail in this, a few million useful lives will once more have been scuppered in vain, and no victory of arms will signify. In short our people must show that, when given freedom of choice, they know how to select the decent and clean ideas and ideals and eschew the dross. But those ideals must first be made available to the people in book and broadcast, stage and screen.

Therefore, our particular contribution to this great cause of winning the peace is to see that the means—the technical equipment—is available both in quantity and in quality—and at a price which will bring the educative benefits of the cinema within the reach of all who have our national heritage at heart.

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Sight and Sound

VOLUME 12 NO 47

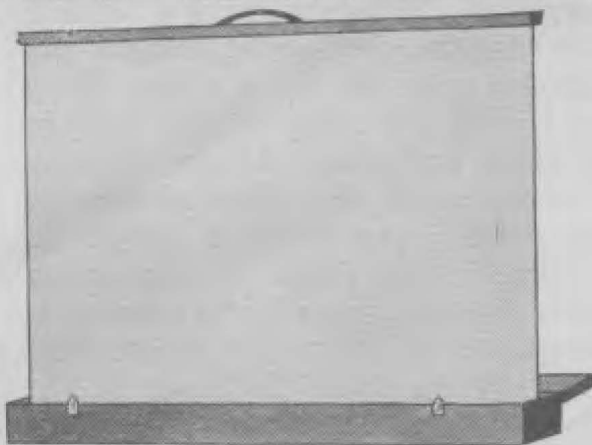
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The First Ten Years

By OLIVER BELL

Director of the British Film Institute

AT THE beginning of October, 1943, the British Film Institute was ten years old. In that time it has managed to establish itself as a centre of information. It has started a much-needed national film archive in the shape of its National Film Library. It has come to be the acknowledged authority on the educational film, while since the outbreak of war it has sustained the Film Society movement and has helped every other organisation or individual interested in the cultural film.

The Institute was founded as a result of the report of the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films. This body was established in 1929 by the British Institute of Adult Education with the aid of a grant from the Carnegie Trustees. Its report *The Film in National Life* (which can still be re-read with profit) appeared in 1932 and suggested the formation of a national film institute. Steps were immediately taken to make the idea a reality. They were made the easier by the passage through Parliament of the Sunday Cinematograph Act. Five per cent of the charity contribution levied on cinemas which opened on Sundays by the local licensing authorities, was to be paid into a special fund to be administered by the Lord President of the Council. The fund was to be used for generally the same purposes as those for which the British Film Institute was created.

This fortunate circumstance has meant that each year so far the Institute has been able to make a successful application to the Privy Council for a grant towards carrying out its objects. Without this very considerable addition to its budget, it would not have

been able to make more than a fraction of the headway which it has.

The objects of the Institute are to "develop the use of the cinema as a means of entertainment and instruction." Its affairs are managed by a Governing Body consisting of three representatives of the cinematograph industry, three representatives of the educational world and three representatives nominated by the Board of Trade, the Home Office and the Scottish Office to represent the public interest. The independent chairman is elected by the governors but has to be approved by the Lord President before he can take office. The present holder of the appointment is Sir William Brass, M.P.

The Institute's terms of reference were so wide that it was necessary to decide the best lines of advance in order to avoid dissipating the Institute's income on projects unlikely to yield a useful return. For this reason one of the first efforts of the Institute was to make itself a centre of impartial information on all subjects connected with the cinema. Not only does it answer questions on directors, cameramen, actors or actresses, and even the names of the films of the past, it also seeks to appraise the values of current films.

This information is made known through the *Monthly Film Bulletin*. One section of this periodical deals with the entertainment or feature film and seeks to appraise each one as trade-shown in terms of its suitability for adults, adolescents, family audiences or children. The other section covers educational films on all kinds of subjects, geography, history, science,

health, physical training, etc. These are appraised by expert committees of teachers who give an opinion of the value of the film not only in relation to subject but also in relation to age group and class-room value. The Institute's judgment may occasionally be at fault but nobody can accuse it of allowing its opinions to be affected by any outside commercial consideration. In this respect, its work is unique.

So far as the use and development of the educational film is concerned the Institute commenced propaganda for the use of films pure and simple. As the years passed it became clear that the film had to be considered in relation to other types of visual aid: the diascope, the episcope, the film strip and so forth. This broadening of its outlook has made its work more effective. No longer is it concerned with adumbrating the use of a certain type of optical aid. Instead it seeks to discover which is the scientific aid (in which is naturally included school broadcasting) best suited for the problem under discussion.

Not Whether But How?

Looking back it is possible to discern that the Institute has really been responsible for moving teaching opinion from the position of no longer asking *whether* but *how* films should be used. It has also looked forward into the future and has prepared a document which was presented to the Board of Education suggesting ways and means of developing the use of optical aids with especial reference to the film. It considers that the most suitable approach is a ten year plan for the supply of apparatus combined with the setting up of a system of regional libraries whereby to facilitate the problem of supply. It would also like to see a central but independent advisory committee dealing with production and other matters.

Another very obvious aspect of the information work of the Institute has

been to make generally available the material which it has collected. Hence it has published lists of films on numerous different subjects. It suggests—and even arranges—suitably balanced programmes to meet the needs of enquirers. These programmes may deal with a specific subject like domestic science, first aid, technical training, etc. They may also deal with Film Appreciation.

Film Appreciation

Film Appreciation is a direct outcome of the development of the National Film Library. The original intention was simply to acquire and preserve films illustrating the history and development of the art of the film. It then became clear that the collection would have to include film records of current events on which the historians of the future could work. The next step was to make available for general use the cream of the material which was being preserved. From this evolved the idea of consciously selecting such material for the so-called "Loan Section" as would help people to have a better understanding of the principles involved in film production, and the development of the art of the cinema.

Too many patrons of the public cinema, it was felt, have only a negative or at the best a flabby reaction to what they see. They have no standards of criticism, no conception of the good and bad points of film-making. To inculcate this sense, the Governors and the National Film Library Committee considered, should be an important function of the Institute. Judging by the response from the amateur of the cine and especially from the youth movement (which has grown up since the Institute was founded) this subject is one of particular interest.

These then are some of the positive aspects of the Institute's work. Fresh ground is continually being broken sometimes in relation to our domestic

problems, sometimes in relation to the Colonial Empire, sometimes in relation to foreign countries. It only remains to say a few words about the preservation work of the National Film Library.

The Library has its own special vaults out in the country where its seven million feet of film are stored. New material comes in at the rate of half a million feet a year. So far as financial considerations will permit, these vaults are fire-proof and the temperature and the humidity in which the films are stored is also controlled. A recent innovation is to test each film by chemical and physical means in order to detect deterioration, and then if the matter is urgent to re-copy it to prevent its entire disappearance by disintegration. This work is costly but valuable. It may reduce the amount which the Institute can spend on short term policy but as a long term investment the Governors feel that it is abundantly justified.

These brief indications will show, it is hoped, that as its founders believed, the Institute has indeed a place to fill in the modern world, and that it has gone some distance towards satisfying the need which caused its creation. No sooner, however, is one task accomplished than others appear. The Institute can never become complacent. Indeed at this present moment it is faced by a succession of problems that should suffice to absorb all its energies for many years to come.

The Cinema in Latin America

by Ramon del Castillo

IN LATIN AMERICA 40,000,000 Latinos visit the cinema each week, forming a rich market that is being increasingly wooed by the Hollywood film-makers; there is a thriving and growing feature-film making industry in Mexico and Argentina (in the case of the former, an industry that is increasingly turning out a product of artistic merit), and there are the smaller producing concerns scattered throughout the remaining Latin-American countries, each trying to build up a national industry within its own domain.

The most outstanding item of interest in the Spanish speaking countries of the Americas is the bitter rivalry between Argentina and Mexico, the latter country having the support of the United States in its efforts to oust Argentina from its position as the leading producer of Spanish language films. It looks very much as though Mexico will realise her ambitions along these lines as this year she will produce sixty films as against twenty

last year. Argentina, on the other hand, will have the greatest difficulty in maintaining its 1942 figure of 56, and most likely the sum total will be considerably less, as Hollywood, which supplies both countries with their raw stock, is doling out supplies plentifully for the needs of Mexico City, while rationing Buenos Aires stringently and allowing the Argentine producers about half of what they need. This would seem to be all part of the American Government's policy to stop Argentina flirting with the Axis nations in the way she has been doing, she is the only American country to allow showings of Axis propaganda films like the UFA *Submarinos Rumbo Al Oeste*, a film that portrays, or attempts to portray, the lengths to which the British will go to put over the double-cross. It is put over a little more skilfully than the efforts of German producers at the beginning of the war, which usually descended into the realms of farce. Argentina

also shows anti-democratic Spanish-made features such as *Sin Novedad en el Alcazar*, a film glorifying the Spanish Fascists.

In addition to the raw stock situation Mexico also had the advantage of being so many thousands of miles nearer to Hollywood, and there have been numerous rumours of Hollywood "names" who are casting their eyes south of the border to the Mexican studios, and the first fruits of these plans are already coming forth with the filming of *Hostages* in both English and Spanish at the Clasa Studios, Mexico's largest, by director Herbert Klein, famous American documentary maker, from a script by Budd Schulberg of *What Made Sammy Run* fame. This bi-lingual venture has caused Clasa to announce that they will attempt further experiment along these lines.

Other rumours have it that Erich von Stroheim will make a Mexican film, and Norman Foster, who last directed the Orson Welles production *Journey Into Fear*, not yet released in England, has turned out *Santa* which is acclaimed as the best Mexican film yet. It is said to have a maximum amount of action and a minimum amount of dialogue, with a strong Orson Welles influence running through the whole film.

Mexicans to Mexico

Mexico is also recalling some of her wandering sons and daughters from north of the border—Ramon Novarro is now an associate producer, Lupe Velez, Tito Guizar, Dolores del Rio, Mapy Cortes, while Irina Baranova made her film debut in *Yolanda*. Another top name in Mexico is all set to repeat his success in the U.S. when Arturo de Cordoba, winner of the Mexican "Oscar" last year, co-stars with Joan Fontaine in the screen adaptation of Daphne du Maurier's *Frenchman's Creek*.

Mexico has turned out a number of

films during the past year that have been commercial successes throughout Latin-America, except Argentina where Mexican films get little playing time, though in Mexico the situation with Argentine films is reversed and they get the same favourable treatment accorded to nationals. The big box-office successes of the year were *The Life of Simon Bolivar*, running four hours, *Silk, Sunshine, and Blood*, a film about bull-fighting that was interesting because of its behind-the-scenes glimpses of the life of big-time bull-fighters in addition to their personal appearances filmed at the biggest of the local arenas, and a hoked version of *The Three Musketeers*, starring "tramp" comedian Mario Moreno ("Cantinflas"), a burlesque that was done with great taste. Moreno announced that his next would follow along the same lines, and would be a comic version of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Mexico also turned out one or two serious attempts to screen religious themes, and succeeded in projecting them with none of the pseudo-religion dressed up with Cecil B. de Mille spectacle that is usually evident in this type of film.

Argentina's Plans

Meanwhile Argentina set a precedent in Spanish language features by buying the screen rights of a work not originally written in Spanish, the play *Sixteen* by Aimee and Philip Stuart.

One of the few other interesting films to come from the Buenos Aires studios during the 1942 season was *Ciniza al Viento* ("Ashes to the Wind"), the first Argentine film with an out-and-out democratic theme, though it proved disappointing in view of what it might have been.

Hollywood is seeking further importance in a market over which she has a virtual monopoly as far as foreign language films go, the only British films getting a look-see are those which

the American distributors are handing; *Dangerous Moonlight* is the only one of any consequence at the moment under the title of *Suicide Squadron*, also the release tag on this film in the United States. *They Flew Alone* is the other British film being distributed at the moment, but it has not created much of a sensation.

The American film that received the widest showing was a two-reeler, *Victory for the Americas*, shown in every cinema except those playing Axis product.

Columbia did a remake of *Los Martes Orquideas*, revamping the title to *You Were Never Lovelier*, which called forth a number of squawks because of the glamourising of the pampas, but *Saludos Amigos*, the Walt Disney technicolor feature cartoon made specially to cement Pan-American good-will, has been and is cleaning up (in Brazil it has a special Portuguese sound-track, and during its première in Rio played five cinemas simultaneously at advanced admission prices).

A Challenge to Hollywood

The rapid rise of the two great national producing centres of the two leading Spanish-speaking republics has begun to successfully challenge Hollywood, and in 1942 the percentages had radically changed in Argentina, with 29 per cent of playing time being given over to American films in the interior of the country, 1 per cent to films made by the Axis partners, and the rest supplied by Argentina and Mexico, though in the larger centres of population Hollywood has managed to keep its supremacy with 65 per cent, Argentine and Mexican features 34 per cent, and Axis countries 1 per cent. However, even in the larger cities Americans are losing ground, with the de-luxe theatres that formerly turned a blind eye on national products now playing them, mainly of course owing to the shortage of

films from Hollywood, but the fact that the home industry has been gaining ground so rapidly on account of the war is going to be an important factor when the war is over.

The most popular type of film in the Latin American cinemas is the operatic, which, incidentally, is how the Argentine industry first found its legs making one and two reel subjects starring operatic personalities, and blood and thunder costume dramas are also very popular.

No Dubbing

There is a definite tendency in the republics against "dubbed" films, the Latins preferring to see their Hollywood favourites speaking English with super-imposed sub-titles and are apt to either snigger or be irritated if these same players "mouth" Spanish.

The importance of the cinema indirectly on life in the Latin American republics cannot be minimised—helping, as it has done, in the emancipation of woman to a great degree, as a result of the picturisation of the freedom of the American woman, though, even now, it is still possible in the little developed parts of the interior to see young girls at the cinema accompanied by the proverbial chaperone. But while the American film is helping to make the Latin American girl more conscious of her position it has also brought with it more serious tendencies, especially in Brazil, where the strong racial intolerance displayed by most Hollywood films is having repercussions and has done something towards fanning the racial prejudices of the white peoples in the countries where there is a mixed colour problem.

All in all there is a thriving industry in the states of South America, and this recently led one large Buenos Aires newspaper to print an article, complete with diagrams, showing how Argentine films were going to lead the world—not a probability, but nevertheless a possibility.

Talkies set them Talking

by
NANCY HUSSEY

THERE really seems to be little point in grumbling that most young people spend two or three nights a week at the pictures. They're likely to go on doing it whatever we think and it would really be infinitely better if we used our breath to lead discussion groups with films as a common experience to start them talking. With radio, films are the chief instruments of education outside the schools, and hold young people's interest continually and constantly while most of them forget both textbooks and blackboards as soon as possible. Judging by appearances films are the chief dictator of taste in clothes, furniture and manners though their imitators may not always realise it. Many of the people who sit in cinemas for at least nine hours (more than a whole normal peacetime working day) each week, scarcely ever open a book, so contact through films is the nearest they are ever likely to get to any teaching of sociology, ethics, geography or the much favoured psychology, once they have left school, at fourteen.

A Major Pleasure

Many of these young boys and girls can't remember ever having had an exciting conversation that led from one subject to another or that got remotely near discussing values of any kind. I have often had them coming up after a discussion and telling me over a cup of something in the canteen that they had "no idea that people talked like this at all, it's lovely". Films are one of the major pleasures of life to them and I have yet to see a film which could not be used as an admirable starting point for a discussion or as an introduction to any subject under the sun. Even the wildest Western has its moral

problems, though, as a boy in a discussion group once explained to me, "But you can't get mixed up really, because the hero's always riding a white horse, and the dirty dog's on a black one!"

The Lead-in

The 'lead in' to discussion with young people however needs a good deal of tact: in the early stages the adult's part in the conversation should be to send them balls that they can't possibly miss and should be able to hit back a good deal faster. This immediately gives them a feeling of equality and self confidence. . . . If it is *The Young Mr. Pitt* that you're leading them to, the direct road of "Jolly good film *The Young Mr. Pitt* don't you think?" will bring you up against a stone wall of suspicion that you're trying to 'get at them' (and how right they are). A casual "Been to the Majestic this week?" however with luck will give you the direct answer back, *but from them*, which makes all the difference and gives you the lead for a second round probably pointing something more than may have met their eyes.

There are now figures to prove that the run on "the book of the film" or biographies relating to well-known personalities in historical films is enormously stimulated by such films as *Anna Karenina*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Lady Hamilton* and *The Young Mr. Pitt*. If one has any connection with young people it is very well worth while not only to refresh one's own memory but to take the extra bit of trouble to borrow one's friends copies of the books, for the club or school library for six months (for the interest and waiting lists may well last that time.)

If this is impossible, a word in time may put an idea into the Chief Librarian's head and a special shelf into the Free Library that wasn't there before. For a film like *Lady Hamilton* may arouse interest in far more than herself and Nelson and lead people to read the other side of the story in "Nelson's Wife", exciting lives of other sailors like Lord Dundonald or "The letters of an Admiral's Wife" or Mainwaring and Dobree's "The Floating Republic." One of the greatest lacks of the so-called underprivileged, I believe is this lack of day-to-day advice and stimulation, an invisible asset which the child of educated parents or at a good school absorbs with the air he breathes.

Let us take three types of best selling film that are likely to be hardy annuals. Each of them in its way bears out the belief of the well-known scenario writer who remarked that "there are only ten plots and nine of them are *Romeo and Juliet*", *The Young Mr. Pitt*, *The Moon is Down* and *Heaven Can Wait*.

Basis for Argument

The Young Mr. Pitt obviously gives an easy lead into a discussion on "Private Life versus a Career", and raises the question whether any man or woman should be asked to give up his own and another's personal happiness for anything on earth. As an alternative there is "*Mens sana in corpore sano*", is genius possessed nearly always at a price? The House of Commons, its traditions and character, the members of the Opposition, the origin of Left Wing and other exciting passages in its history. Is this the way to learn history? Do films distort the facts? Does history repeat itself? What makes a good orator? How important is public speaking including comparisons of Churchill and Hitler and Mussolini. Great Speeches which everybody should know about and so on.

The Moon is Down raises quite a different set of questions. Is it a true interpretation of the probable state of affairs in occupied countries or just propaganda? Is it true to life? Was it especially moving and if so why? I myself would use this particular film as one of the rare examples of a film that is so good that it is worth taking some trouble to find out why it was so especially good. It must be remembered however that for a considerable number of people "we murder to dissect" entertainment, and only a very few of the group may be really interested in this part of the discussion. It is best to keep it to the end of the evening unless they bring it up themselves. Obviously each individual discussion leader has his or her own way of introducing such a discussion, but taking Aristotle's old order of "Plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle to say nothing of song" there is an enormous amount to bite on. The whole of this article would easily be taken up with it but just in passing the characterisation is well worth turning up the book for and even getting four of them to read aloud the early descriptions of the four officers. The thought is enough for at least three separate discussions if you take such sentences as:

"Orden is more than a mayor. He is his people. He knows what they are doing, thinking, without asking, because he will think what they think."

* * *

"One of the tendencies of the military mind and pattern is an inability to learn, an inability to see beyond the killing which is its job."

* * *

"Punishment to be effective must be dramatised."

* * *

"Lanser looked at him and smiled a little sadly. "We have taken on a job, haven't we?"

"Yes," said the Mayor, "the one

impossible job in the world, the one thing that can't be done."

"And that is?"

"To break a man's spirit permanently."

* * *

Spectacles such as the opening little sequence of the hand on the map first spreading like a spider and then clenched; the scenes in the cottage, especially the girl's face in the shadow, the snow and moonlight scenes and the executions are a lesson in film appreciation that may give standards of values against which other films seen later may be measured. The question of the emotional effect of music in this film the atmosphere built up by the singing at the executions is a subject by itself.

Heaven Can Wait is a simpler business altogether—colour and Merry Widowry laid on with a trowel and a good deal of all being well if it ends well, especially if you're born with a silver spoon in your mouth. Still it's a nice study in the rival claims of heredity and environment and the art of compromise, and if they have seen

other Lubitsch films they can discuss whether they like these rich American fairy tales or whether films like *The Moon is Down* send you home feeling that you have had much more of a real meal.

A Film Society

Discussions of the kind I have described above can be held with a minimum of preparation but can well lead on to the formation of a film society using documentary and Central Film Library films illustrating the development of cinema, or carefully choosing films as a basis for discussion of economic and social problems.

Most energetic club leaders have their hands more than full and few may want to spend their short amount of spare time seeing films for a busman's holiday, though if they do it will prove very well worth while. But what about some of the people who must be interested in films (if they read SIGHT AND SOUND) offering to run a club film society or discussion group one evening a fortnight or one evening a month?

Television and the Films

by C. T. DE JAEGER

EVERYBODY is interested these days in what form of entertainment television has in store for the world, in view of its great technical developments in the past four years. Before the war television was making a slow but steady progress in this country and was finding its way into homes which could afford the then still expensive sets. With the outbreak of hostilities television was discontinued, being closely linked with our secret defence weapon of radio location which has since so successfully helped to locate and to

destroy the planes of the Luftwaffe attacking us. Therefore, until a general armistice is declared, the technical advances in television will have to remain untold, but it is possible to foresee the place which television will have in post-war entertainment in our homes as well as in cinemas.

The question frequently crops up as to whether television will be a substitute for films and that the film industry will consequently disappear.

There is one group of public opinion which believes that it will take a con-

siderable time, that is a number of years, for television apparatus to come within reach of everyman's pocket as has been the case with radio sets. Furthermore they argue that television programmes in the home can never create that atmosphere of a cinema or theatre with the applauding audience and everything that goes with it.

Those with a wider vision of future things to come foresee television as having a revolutionary influence in our post-war everyday life and most likely will have an effect on public entertainment similar to when sound was introduced on film.

Undoubtedly television and film will be closely linked together since the latter is an essential part for the making of a lasting record of events for presentation by television at a later date. Should a cheaper substitute than film stock be evolved in the future this might slightly affect film but this is most unlikely anyway for some time to come.

Announcers Will be Seen

In any event radio news bulletins will have a pictorial background of the actual event and lecturers whose voice one only hears now will be able to screen to his audience in their homes the subject under discussion.

On the purely entertainment side films will play an important part. America has gone ahead in this respect and film companies over there foreseeing the great possibilities of film television have acquired interests in television patents and transmission concerns. It is quite possible to foresee that a film company might televise its films direct to its cinemas and thus eliminate the large number of prints required these days for presentation of one film. A master copy can be televised to each cinema where an engineer controls the transmission. Films which have had their first public presentation in some cases may be received in one's home.

On the other hand the system of "static television" will come into use whereby similar to your telephone, the subscriber dials a code number, according to the printed programme mailed every week to him, and connects himself with the transmission he wants to have thrown on his screen, ranging from films, theatre, shows, lectures and even to the latest front page newspaper headlines.

In the U.S.A. before this war a televised newspaper was already in existence and subscribers received in their homes a complete newspaper with photos coming off a roll from the set hired them by the company.

Education

One very powerful factor which television will bring along is the great possibilities opened for the education of school children. Films, specially produced for the mentality of the average school child, as well as direct transmissions from the locality under discussion, will teach children in picture and sound facts about history, geography, botany and many similar subjects which up to now had to be learned from books. School children of different nations will be able to see each other at study and play, forging a link of understanding for the future generations.

Radio transmission to-day of static photos has become a matter of seconds and in the daily press the reproduction of photos of this nature is nothing new. As to whether a complete newspaper with photos will be daily delivered into one's home via television remains to be seen. That films will hold the field of entertainment in our post-war television programmes is unquestionable, in black and white, and eventually only in natural colour.

Television will be an asset to the film and with its message reach into everybody's home. As a propaganda and advertising medium it has immense possibilities. A theme or a product can

be more forcibly brought home to the "viewer" and influence his outlook. The news reel of to-day may be superseded by a "television news", most likely to be recorded on 16 mm., a size which television will assist to make more popular, though at first 35 mm. will still hold its own. Travèlogues will come again to the fore and here film will play a leading part in producing such pictures from all over the world under suitable pictorial conditions for television. Shooting will be simplified and recording partly cut down, as a mute picture with a musical background or actual sound, controlled by the lecturer who provides the commentary during the actual television broadcast, will suffice.

In short the possibilities of television

and film which will become closely dependent on one another and bring visual entertainment to everybody's home on cold, wintry nights even to the remotest parts of a country, are immense, and the foregoing is just an out-line of what the writer foresees, based on those few facts which under conditions of war are available for publication.

What the film has done in the past to propagate ideas and provide entertainment to the large section of the public all over the world, television combined with film can greatly contribute to a peaceful future of the world, to avoid misunderstandings among nations, and to the happiness as well as education of the peoples of this world.

Teachers and Films

Mr. J. Fairgrieve, the well-known teacher and geographer, writes:

In the last number of SIGHT AND SOUND Mr. Gillett in an article which I would recommend to all teachers says, "If I were training teachers in the use of optical apparatus I would insist that no student should touch films until he or she had attained proficiency in teaching with 'still' pictures." This is good sound sense and indeed I would go further and say quite shortly, "No teacher should touch films until he or she has attained proficiency in teaching with still pictures." This has implications which I will not here particularise.

What I wish to suggest is that there is a correlative fact that is equally important. Recently I have been experimenting on the basis of lessons with a re-edited and much shortened silent version of the first reel of *Farm Factory* (G.B.I.). In one school I had the opportunity of giving two lessons; or, rather, the same lesson as near as may be to two different forms. One of these had just taken General School

Examination, the other, and, I was told, the brighter, should take General School next year. The result was interesting. The latter form responded to the teaching and learned what the film and the teacher (myself) pointed out, but there was a curious lack of response to the things on the film and their implication. The lesson to the less bright form was, in the vulgar tongue, "a howling success;" it "went with a bang"; I did not require to point things out; they were seen and their significance realised. I wondered at the difference but I am pretty sure that the geography teacher was right in saying that the reason was that the less smart form had, for the previous year, had special practise in studying and analysing *still* pictures and the other had not. This would seem to indicate that if pupils are to get the best out of films they should have had practice in studying and analysing still pictures and that if they have not had this practice films may instruct but they can scarcely educate. *Verb Sap!*

A Letter to Oliver Bell

From Keith F. Bean

DEAR O.B.,

The then President of the United States said to the representative of the Canadian Government: "We didn't think you'd have the guts to do it. Go right ahead. Of course we don't mind."

The States had put a protective customs tariff on certain Canadian goods. Canada had sent an envoy to Washington to sound the U.S. reaction to the prospect of similar tariffs against U.S. goods entering Canada. The presidential reply seems to me to clarify the American outlook in international competition. It says with friendly realism: We're good neighbours but we're both business men; and in business, for our part, we're going to use any methods we can hope to get away with—and if we can we'll bluff you out of using them.

Healthy Competition

It is a healthy outlook in the present state of the development of the nations. It is an outlook that in no way affects the basic ties of friendship and common interest between nations.

Now in the trading side of the film industry we have this attitude fully admitted. We have Mr. Arthur Rank and Paramount's Mr. J. W. Hicks conducting, besides their private conversations, an evening-paper dialogue. And Mr. Rank says he is out for a world market, if necessary in competition with Hollywood. And Mr. Hicks says: "We welcome competition. It keeps us on our toes."

Now this competition, friendly but adultly realistic, extends into virtually every department of our relations with America. Quarter-page U.S. government advertisements tell the Indian newspaper reader that American aircraft are saving the free world. Ameri-

can Senators, prompted by the vast and highly organised American airline industry, go in on the offensive-defensive to champion the interests of their nation in post-war air routes over the Empire. Meeting the demands created by U.S. expeditionary forces the Australian government radio stations cut down the time they devote to the broadcasting of B.B.C. material to make more time for U.S. broadcasts. Similarly, England receives a steady flow of American entertainers. And in politics and diplomacy there is the same competition—within the framework of a common purpose and a war-winning unity—but still competition.

Film Propaganda

Reconsidering this quarter's films, we are led to a question. Are we using our opportunities on the world's screens as efficiently as the Americans?

One immediate subject demands a comparison. Set beside the efficient American *Battle of Britain* our own film on the theme was pale and ineffective. There comparison ends for lack of British counterparts. But let us look at the U.S. output. The proper study of the propaganda value of our film-making is the film-making of America.

When Seversky and Disney get together on *Victory Through Air Power* they produce a fine illustrated lecture. In their review of the early development of flying the main impression is that all, or practically all, the records were established by American planes. There is here and there a passing reference to extra-American effort but the lesson is inevitably—and most plausibly—driven home, the lesson of the superiority of U.S. men and material.

You get that sort of commercial pro-

paganda—national prestige advertising—in even more specific ways. In *Hitler's Madman*, for example: "It looks good." "It is—it's made in the United States."

But it is much more insistent than an isolated remark. In this same film it is American planes which drop the parachutists who are to organise the underground movement—and that is in Czechoslovakia. The Americans are said to be moving on Europe at that time—and that was before Lidice, June 10, 1942. And in case the point is not sufficiently driven home it is bolstered by the German housewife's "I remember the last time". And, further, it is specifically stated that Woodrow Wilson was the author of the modern Czech state.

Not a bad collection but it can be paralleled by a dozen films.

Mission to Moscow

In *Mission to Moscow* diplomatic prestige-building is strongly developed. The film sets out to establish U.S. as by far the wisest diplomatic power. But there are little points too which gloss history in America's favour. Emphasis is placed on Woodrow Wilson as founder of the League of Nations—leaving the blame for the League's failure not only on the intransigence of Japan and Germany but quite as emphatically on the indifference of England—which quietly skips the part U.S. might have played, but did not play, in making collective security work. And even when the war broke over Europe, the heroic vigour of Davies' personal campaigning, gripping because it is positive, determined and far-sighted, inevitably obscures the less inspiring attitude of American national consciousness in all those months until Japan forced the U.S. into war.

Sometimes this patriotism overreaches and involves more than the assertion of American virtue. In *Action in the North Atlantic*, for ex-

ample, it is the Dutchman who is blamed for getting out of position in the convoy—a small point, but typical. Typical, too, is the reiteration of the excellence of the American liberty ship and typical the final dotting of the i: "It's a miracle." "No. It's American seamanship."

In *Tonight We Raid Calais* there is definite story emphasis (three years afterwards) of the French hostility to the English because of Oran.

Lie Plugging

In *Five Graves to Cairo* there is the assertion (again three years afterwards) that the British refused to take French troops aboard their rescue boats at Dunkirk. The assertion remains unanswered until much later in the film—when the answer is made to sound much more like a weak excuse than a contradiction.

In *Bomber's Moon* American planes and airmen are the only ones shown as operating against Europe (including night-bombing raids which they certainly were not making up to that time). The only British plane shown is a Spitfire, flown by a German, which is easily shot down by a Messerschmitt flown by an American.

We could multiply the examples, but they all amount to the same thing—a constant, nationally conscious exposition of the American view. I have heard it resented but surely it is a matter not for resentment or envy but for emulation.

I am aware of the British Council and other films which are sent out to the world to expound the British way of life and, of course, the British war effort. But the point is that the selling of national outlook to the world is, in the case of America, made to permeate the whole output of entertainment films. That way it is hammered home regularly—and to a vast audience which possibly sleeps or chatters through non-fictional films.

The preservation and development

of the British cultural tradition is not, of course, going to be achieved solely through the entertainment film—any more than the riches of Shakespeare can be enjoyed merely with a Knowledge of Basic English. But Basic English can be the appetiser and one which because of its simplicity can be almost universally purveyed. In the same way we have in our film-making an opportunity, clamouring for exploitation, to

reach the millions, from those who are in the kindergarten stage (with British culture) upward.

And now, my dear O.B., we have failed to notice the really important films of the quarter. Let us mention in passing that Lubitsch's *Heaven Can Wait* and Sam Wood's *King's Row* have finally reached us. Two contributions to filmic culture for which we are truly grateful.

Vital Background for Drama

by H. FORSYTH HARDY

IT IS A familiar criticism of British studio films that they are lacking in national character: that they fail to recreate a recognisably English (or Scottish or Welsh) background for drama.

There are many reasons for this. One of the chief is the close confinement of the film industry to the London area which results in ignorance about and indifference to what is happening in the rest of the country. (Curiously, it does not very often result in good films about London. Contrast the effectiveness with which the Svensk Filmindustri uses Stockholm as a setting.) I am concerned here, however, not with the general question but with one aspect only: the contribution which the art director may make to the character of a film.

His opportunities are limited. I doubt whether, in many instances, he is called in for consultations with the scenario writer or present when decisions about locations are being taken. His influence begins when the film, in its essentials, is already taking shape. Even at this stage, however, he can have a transforming influence on a film: he can create a vital background for the dramatic action and he can give the film a character which will locate it convincingly in place and time.

I realise that this is generalisation but feel it holds some truth. The work of the art director is the least well-documented aspect of film-making. (I do not recollect one film critic noting that the memorably striking sets in *Tarakanova* were by Andrijew). Edward Carrick's "Designing for Motion Pictures", published in the spring of 1941, is admirable as far as it goes; but its author's concern with the practical aspects of film design limits his opportunities for analysing individually what art directors have contributed to specific films.

It was because it felt the need of an opportunity for looking critically at the work of art directors from the point of view of their creative influence on films that the Edinburgh Film Guild arranged during the summer an Exhibition on Film Décor in the National Gallery of Scotland. It was a comparatively small exhibition, war causes limiting the amount of work which could be collected and shown; but by displaying a number of original designs, accompanied by stills of the settings as they were constructed, the exhibition did demonstrate the contribution the art director may make to a film and thus achieved its purpose.

Eight Contributors

Examples of the work of eight art directors were shown: Andre Andrijew, Alfred Jünge, Vincent Korda, Lawrence Irving, Edward Carrick, Duncan Sutherland, John Bryan and W. C. Andrews. It was instructive to note their different styles—Andrijew's bold, vivid designs, testing the resource of the set constructors; Carrick's finely-drawn sketches with their concern for accurate detail; the prominence given to figures in Irving's drawings; the feeling of size and space in Korda's work. Some of the designs were dominated by their practical purpose. Others were fanciful conceptions which it was difficult to imagine being translated into lath and plaster.

It is difficult without illustrations to discuss the proof the exhibition offered of the significant influence the art director has on a film. Perhaps the most detailed opportunity for examining the relation between design and set was offered by Alfred Jünge's work. A selection of the water-colour sketches he prepared for *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* were on view and the source of much of this film's visual brilliance was immediately clear. One of the key sequences is the duel at the gymnasium of the German barracks and Jünge's drawing of the vaulted hall with its peculiar atmosphere of early morning expectancy reveals the origin of this set's memorable effectiveness. The same result had been achieved with the art director's conception of the scene in the Cafe Hohenzollern. In these sequences at least Jünge was probably putting his knowledge of the place and time to good effect; but it was clear from his other work shown (*Jew Süss*, *Good-bye, Mr. Chips*, and *Sailing Along*) that he is versatile, painstaking and successful in creating vital backgrounds for film drama.

Another interesting example of the art director's influence was afforded

by Duncan Sutherland's designs for *Gaslight* and *Thunder Rock*. In the former the art director, contriving an impressively evocative atmosphere, contributed significantly to the film's character and dramatic suspense. In achieving this result Sutherland relied more on dressing the set than on elaborately detailed drawings. Whatever his method he succeeded in making a positive contribution to the film. Opportunities were perhaps more limited in *Thunder Rock*, with its single setting for the main phases of the drama; but few who saw the film will forget the brief English potteries sequence, with its grim glimpse of cramped slum conditions. Here is an example of what art direction can do for a film: a setting which might have been quaint or negative immediately impressed one with its compelling realism.

Creating Atmosphere

One other example may be given. *Fanny by Gaslight*, Anthony Asquith's adaptation of the Michael Sadleir novel, has not been shown at the time of writing; but, basing an opinion on a comparison between designs and stills, it is clear that John Bryan's work as art director has had an important influence on the film. This story about London in the 'seventies, its pubs and night haunts, its gas-brackets and hansom cabs, the bustles and tail-coats, the Gaiety Girls and the stage-door johnnies—here is an opportunity for décor combining liveliness and period atmosphere. Bryan's spirited sketches suggest that the opportunity has been skilfully exploited.

It would be an over-statement to suggest that the real future of the British cinema lies in its art directors; but they have a more important part to play in our film-making than is often recognised; and they could do much to give our studio films a recognisably native quality.

An Experiment in Pupil Appraisal

by Andrew W. Paterson

THE FOLLOWING is an abbreviated account of an effort made to awaken in pupils their powers of observation and criticism. The experiment was carried out because it was realised that there will be no better world unless it is peopled with better citizens. The world will continue in the same old way so long as the great mass of people drift along, unobservant of what is going on around them either for their good or for their detriment, unable to criticise, to sift the false from the true, and to arrive at some sort of reasoned judgment on affairs and on themselves.

To make it possible for the pupils to learn to observe and criticise, use was made of the Pupil's Film Appraisal Form devised by the Scottish Council for Research in Education.* This form requires the pupil to record the main facts observed in the film in the order in which they appeared; to state if he would like to know more about the subject; if he would like any part of the film repeated, and why; which parts of the film he found most interesting; which uninteresting; which parts he found amusing; which parts too long; which too short; to point out any part he found hard to understand; to give in words a general opinion of the film; and, finally, to say whether he thought the film very good, good, or poor.

The class was at the qualifying stage and the experiment lasted from September to the end of January during which period the following films were shown: *Grain Harvest*, *Fleetwood Trawlers*, *Tawny Owl*, *Mutton*, *Family of Great Tits* and *Herring*. Instead of

*See "The Assessment of Educational Films", Research Council Publication No. XVII.

introducing the film with an informative lesson embodying the subject-matter of the film, the teacher put questions which the pupils would be able to answer if they properly observed the film. Here is a sample of questions in preparation for *Family of Great Tits*:

- (a) Where do the parent birds live in winter?
- (b) Why do they live there?
- (c) What do they feed on?
- (d) What does one of the tits do to obtain its food?
- (e) Where does it nest in winter?
- (f) Where does it make its nest in spring?

Five or six days after projection the pupils had to complete the appraisal form. It may be mentioned that on the first occasion of using the form they were given ample opportunity before projection to acquaint themselves with the headings on the form.

The adequacy of the reports of the main facts of the film generally corresponded to the mark obtained in the Control Examination. There were, however, a few isolated surprises where the adequacy of observation was unexpectedly good. Unfortunately, I.Q.s were not available but experience with a previous class where some 24 I.Q.s. were available, seems to confirm the view that concrete methods of teaching—such as the film—are an advantage for the lower I.Q. pupils.

In regard to that section of the appraisal form where the pupils are invited to express opinions, the teacher stressed the fact that they were not expected to rack their brains for an answer that would please the teacher but should give their honest opinion on the matter, the answer that best pleased themselves. Nor, for the same reason, was there any necessity to

wonder what their classmates in other desks were writing.

The answers appear to suggest that the experience stimulated the critical powers of the pupils.

Questions Raised

The following aspects for example roused their curiosity. In *Grain Harvest*, three pupils wanted to know what happened to the grain when it had been put in sacks and stored away. In *Fleetwood Trawlers*, one wanted to know at what time of the year the boat left port and when it returned; another wanted to know the colour of the funnel. In *Tawny Owl* one pupil wondered how an owl could eat a rat without being poisoned; and another, where the owls go to in summer when the sun is too hot for their eyes. One gentle girl—and it was a surprise to her teacher—after seeing *Mutton* expressed the desire to see the sheep being killed! In *Family of Great Tits*, a boy asked if tits have eggs every spring and the same number of eggs; several wanted to know what age the nestlings were when they started to fly; another, probably remembering *Tawny Owl*, wondered how the father-bird helped the family. The film *Herring* started with the landing of the catch; several expressed the desire to see the netting of the fish; and one or two would have liked to see more of the machinery that landed the baskets.

The majority of the parts that pupils would have liked to see repeated were the parts that interested them; but, out of fifty-nine aspects, nineteen were selected because they were either not understood, or too short, or not clearly photographed. The unanimity with which pupils select a certain topic as the most interesting is a reflection on the emphasis the film lays on a definite aspect of the subject. The writer suggests that in this section of the appraisal form one has the

opportunity of discovering what is the highlight of the film (if any), and the opportunity, too, of gauging the mentality of one's pupils.

The nature study films, it is apparent, provide more items for amusement than the films depicting men at work. The young being fed in *Family of Great Tits* provided most of the fun, while the tit nibbling the cocoanut and manœuvring the fat on the string amused several. The owl bathing was the choice of the big majority in *Tawny Owl*. Nine topics were chosen by thirteen scholars in *Mutton* without any striking unanimity, though why one girl (A1 in the Control Examination) should in a film about sheep choose to be amused by "people walking in the streets" is not quite apparent.

Some Films Too Short

The only film in which there was any approach to unanimity on parts that seemed too short was *Herring*. To most pupils the whole film seemed too short and one girl was actually under the impression that she had seen only part of a film. To others, the auction seemed too short.

Children, as a whole, are not disposed to criticise a short as being too long, and usually each individual advances a solitary opinion.

With respect to the expression of a general opinion in words, one does not expect much from a qualifying class. Most are content at the initial stage to state whether or not they found the film interesting.

The following, however, are some of the opinions on one or two of the films.

Grain Harvest: "I did not expect to see women at the threshing mill. I thought it was only men." "It was good, but not too clear." "The picture was rather dim. I learned how pleasant and healthy farming must be." "It showed me how to

make stooks." "I found out how the men manage to make a point on the stack."

Family of Great Tits: "I liked it very much although I saw most of the natural thing in the country. I would like to know where the young birds were taken when they fell off the tree." "I was only sorry for one thing and that was because it was not coloured." "I did not know that tits eat coconut." "Anybody who took an interest in birds would enjoy this film." "Found out that tits do not go to another country in winter." "Should have shown more of the young tits."

It is not suggested, of course, that to put an appraisal form into the hands of each and every child in the qualifying class after viewing a film will make that child an able critic. The opportunity is well worth creating, however, and the writer found the class as a whole improving with each film.

Before the class broke up and the pupils dispersed to other schools, the

teacher and the class had a talk together on the value of their experience with the films and the film appraisal forms. To the question, "What parts of your mind did you put into use when seeing the films and writing answers on the forms?", the responses came in this order—memory, concentration, interest, observation, curiosity, intelligence, feelings, and sympathy. These were re-arranged in this order: curiosity, interest, observation, concentration, intelligence, emotion, criticism, memory. It was further suggested that the experience showed the value of thinking for oneself. This led to the point that it was only in countries like our own (democracies) that one could think for oneself and express an opinion freely; that under a ruler like Hitler such things were forcibly suppressed. And, finally, if they wanted to preserve the right to be free, they had to be ever on the watch, to observe what kind of government existed in their own city and in their own country.

THE FILM SENSE*

Reviewed by E. H. LINDGREN

Curator of the National Film Library

Much has been written and said of the art of the film since 1908 at least and 99 per cent of it has been either transparent rubbish or simply the expression of vague hopes for the future. What has been created in the cinema so far is a lively medium of narrative and of exposition: but it would be difficult to name even ten films which have in them anything of the stuff out of which a distinctive film art might be made. Without attempting the impossible task of definition, it may be said of art of any kind that it is

THE FILM SENSE by S. M. Eisenstein. (Faber, 10s. 6d.)

characterised by its use of form: in painting, composition and colour; in music, pattern; in poetry, rhythm. Aided by form, the artist seeks to convey the whole of an experience, the feeling of it and not merely the intellectual deductions to be made from it. It is Eisenstein's principal contribution to the cinema, in both practice and theory, to have concerned himself with exploring the film's formal possibilities. Amidst all the airy talk of film art (small wonder that our British documentarians despise aesthetics!) he alone has found and begun to chart the route.

Film Sense is the first book by Eisenstein to appear in English, although articles by him have occasionally been published in specialist periodicals since 1927. It falls into four main sections. In the first he seeks to establish the thesis that montage, the association of separate fragments of representation to create an image or idea, is the fundamental creative process, not only in the cinema, but in all representational art; and he turns for confirmation to the arts of poetry (Pushkin, Keats, Shelley, Milton), of acting and of painting (analysing Leonardo da Vinci's "scenario" for *The Deluge*). This part (which was originally published in *Life and Letters* in 1939) is one of the most suggestive in the book.

Vertical Montage

In the second part, by way of preparation for establishing a principle which shall provide a satisfactory basis for relating sound and picture in the sound-film (which he calls 'vertical montage') he analyses artists' sketches of their first impressions of experiences before they have begun to translate them into their own art medium, and shows that all the senses are called into play. He is then led to a particular problem, the question of whether there is an absolute correspondence between colour and sound. Pursuing this query he proceeds in the third part, *Colour and Meaning* to a detailed study of yellow and its historical associations, and decides against the theory of absolute correspondence. These two sections, although full of flashes of brilliance and insight, and rich with references, considered as a whole are quite the least satisfactory part of the book; the first is lacking in clarity, and the second pursues, with great flourish, a chimera.

Finally, in part four, *Form and Content: Practice*, he returns again to the problem of finding an "inner

synchronisation" between the music and the picture of a sound film; and by "inner synchronisation" he means the relation of their formal elements as distinct from such a merely representational relationship as governed the choice of programme music for the old silent film. Here, in what is the most concrete and fascinating part of the book, he analyses a short sequence from *Alexander Nevsky* in detail, the analysis being illustrated by diagrams, stills, and the musical score.

This is a work which no student of aesthetics, and certainly no serious student of the film, can afford to ignore. It is only a pity that its style is so often involved and obscure; this must inevitably discourage many people who come to the book knowing little of Eisenstein's work and achievement.

Among the valuable appendices are a list of Eisenstein's films, a bibliography of his writings in English, and extracts from his drafts for several films.

Bradford Civic Playhouse

The Secretary of the Bradford Civic Playhouse reports:

We have barely got into our stride yet as far as Sunday Film Society activities are concerned, but had two shows during September and October. In the former we showed a revival of *The Thirty-nine Steps*, as an example, which will well stand the test of time, of Hitchcock's early work. With it we had a gay and interesting programme from the British Film Institute — *The Big Broadcast*, *Brahm's Hungarian Dance*, and *The Hague*. In October we revived *The New Gulliver*, which we hoped would appeal to the new audience for Russian films as much as it did to the connoisseurs some years ago. We are hoping to have *Strategy for Metals* and *C.E.M.A.*, and possibly *This is Colour* for the supporting short films. In the ordinary programme for the weeks of September and October, we had an excellent week with *49th Parallel*, and the other films chosen for these months were *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Circumstances Attenuates*, and *Bambi*. Amongst the shorts were *The Gay Parisian*, *Spanish Fiesta*, *Canal Gypsies*, *Athens*, *Malta G.C.* and *Modern Miracle*.

Recreational Education

by R. Rallison, M.Ed., B. Sc., of the Technical College,
West Hartlepool

IN CONNECTION with the operation of a Technical Day School for boys between the ages of 13 to 16 years of age, an attempt has been made to link the schemes for Science, Engineering and History by a special course called for convenience, Educational Recreation.

This course aims at providing a broad, cultural background based on the fullest possible use of optical aids, so as to nourish the interests and enthusiasms of boys in matters with a mechanical and scientific bias, as well as to inspire and awaken the imagination of boys to the part played by scientific discovery towards progress. A subsidiary aim is an attempt to fill any gaps in the curriculum, surveyed as a whole, from the standpoint of the good, balanced general education by topics whose approach seems appropriate to the visual method. This particularly applies to vital biological material dealing with sex and life where a film such as *The Human Body* (Instructional Screen) showing the life-cycle of the human embryo, does a piece of essential teaching on a subject about which boys had asked questions but which is difficult to discuss in the classroom in a forthright manner.

The Work Plan

The actual scheme of work was planned in the form of approximately six topics per yearly age group. The topics were selected so as to utilise scientific interests of boys as revealed by a previous piece of research. Visual material suitable for silent films, film-slides and episcopes was arranged or collected to fit round the skeleton of topics. Some of the topics were, "Iron, the world's most useful metal;" "Coal,

man's first great source of energy;" "Giant Power of Steam;" "Bottled Energy;" "Under Water—Romance of Diving and Submarining;" "Digging for Victory;" "Monarchs of the Seven Seas;" "Miracle of Flight;" "Weather Forecasts;" "Calling all Nations;" "The Magic Eye—Wonder of Television;" "Wonders of Photography;" "Soil and Fertility;" "The Short Waves;" "Mechanical Music;" "Seeing the Invisible;" "Eyes on the Universe;" "Control of Plagues;" "Sex and Life;" "British Army."

No Television Film

Each topic was usually introduced by means of a silent 16 mm. film hired from Educational & General Services, Gebescope, or Instructional Screen. The only topic for which as yet no film has been found is "The Magic Eye—Wonder of Television". The film being shown was only commented on during showing if it was felt that clarification was needed or if some boy raised an urgent question. Boys' questions were not really encouraged at this stage; that came later; what was wanted was observant attention to the visual images; boys were told to think of their questions as they arose in the process of showing the film and to have them ready for formulation at the discussion stage. Discussion follows vision. First, the queries of boys are dealt with, then stress laid on any important or novel section of the film. Films are only reshowed if the class think this worth while or if the teacher feels that it is necessary.

This usually ends the first period of time devoted to the topic under consideration. Often, too, hints are given at this juncture as to the future develop-

ment of the topic and indications made as to material for boys to assemble and collect in preparation for the "Expression-effect" of the topic. At least four periods are given to the full development of each topic, a period being 45 minutes per week. Some of the topics, *e.g.*, "Miracle of Flight," take much longer, even up to 10 periods.

Use of Film Slides

The next stage in developing a topic requires use of relevant film-slides of which a large source of supply exists in Newton & Co. and Visual Information Service. They can be hired like silent films but it seems more convenient in building up a scheme to purchase outright the selection of film-slides decided on, as they are then available just when needed. It is quite sufficient to have to cope with ordering and returning silent films and perhaps wondering if they will arrive at the right time, or if the film wanted be available, without adding another variable to the situation, by hiring the film-slides also.

The final stage in the development utilises the episcopes and for this large packets of pictures and illustrations of all kinds suitable for the topic in hand have been assembled ready for use. For this newspapers, weeklies like *Picture Post* *Modern Wonder* and *The Engineer* have been found invaluable.

The methods used with film slides and episcopes are similar. A previously selected boy will be given the synopsis provided with the film-slides (or in the case of the episcopes, the material to be used in the actual lesson), with instructions to look it over and be ready to give a commentary on what is to be shown. Questions asked by boys are dealt with at the time and here the use of a torch is found very useful to pick out the questioners.

To gauge the response to this approach and yet stress the "recreation" side of so-called Educational Recre-

ation it was felt that records and notes should be reduced to a minimum but attempt should be made to encourage boys to regard the subject as a hobby for spare time at home.

Since the courses aimed at inspiration, it was felt that if it was succeeding, it should result in voluntary "Expression-effects". Some ways of expression were usually pointed out, *e.g.*, collection of pictures and an agreed tariff of "plus" marks was drawn up to encourage this and other forms of expression.

Forms of Follow-up

Other forms of expression which have grown up are:

- (1) Bringing of further material for episcopes showing, *e.g.* when the topic "British Army" was dealt with recently, numerous copies of "Combined Operations" quickly appeared.
- (2) Films (usually 9.5 mm.) used at home by brothers or fathers have been brought for the class to see, *e.g.*, when the topic "Under Water" was dealt with, one lad brought along a 4-reel drama (Pathescope) called Q-ships; "Miracle of Flight" produced "Air Progress" (Pathescope), while "Monarchs of the Seven Seas" produced "Our Navy" made by one lad's brother joining together four 60 ft. Pathescope reels.
- (3) Drawings and diagrams from films or pictures seen—very popular.
- (4) Accounts of films—not popular.
- (5) Reading of library books and particularly the numerous modern illustrated publications like "Warships of Japan", "The Army Today," "British and Allied Fleets," "Meteorology for Airmen," "Submarines at War," "Aircraft Recognition," "Your Motorcycle," "Engines Today," etc. was encouraged and seems very popular with boys who have spare cash to buy them.

SOME NOTES AND NEWS

British Film Institute

Miss Dorothy Grayson, late Science Mistress of the High Storrs Grammar School, Sheffield, has joined the staff of the Institute as its travelling educational representative. In the same way as was Mr. B. E. Gillett in 1941-2, she is at the service of Local Education Authorities, teachers and others interested in the use of the film for educational purposes. She is working from her home address which is: Moorland House, Dore, Sheffield.

The recent White Paper *The Youth Service after the War*, has several things to say about the cinema in relation to young people. The most important statement in the report is that in para. 34 namely:—"The cinema's potentialities for good are boundless, and we urge that much more attention be given, both in school hours and in clubs, by discussion, informed criticism and planned cinema-going, to the use which can be made of it." This seems a clear lead to the Institute to be up and doing.

The importance which is being attached to films by the Youth Movement as a whole is shown by the instantaneous success of the Institute's new 1s. 6d. pamphlet: "A Select List of Documentary Films," all of which are suitable for use with discussion groups on international, social and political subjects.

Counsel's opinion on Film Strips has been received. The conclusion reached is that there is copyright involved in all film strips. "Anyone," says learned counsel, "proposing to make a film strip or film slides should seek permission to include any work which he wishes to use in which copyright can possibly exist. Any book or print—even a picture postcard—bears the publishers name and the trouble of communicating with him is well worth while. . . . To obtain permission is the only safe course."

The Institute has published a List of 16 mm. Scientific Films including Mathematics, Physical Science and Biology. The list, which has been corrected up till August, 1943, costs 2s.

The Governors are trying to build up a reference and lending library on the history of the development of the art of the film. Already they possess several hundred volumes and have just purchased another hundred. If any readers have for disposal any works relevant to this subject, the Director of the Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1, will be glad to consider them.

National Film Library

Alterations are still proceeding to the preservation vaults so as to eliminate as far as possible the fire risk. Supply difficulties have slowed down the rate at which the alterations are being effected but it is hoped that by the end of the year all the existing vaults will have been modified.

Chemical testing of films is going on. The tests so far have been applied exclusively to films made before 1910. The results show that as a result of bad storage conditions prior to their coming into the hands of the National Film Library Committee almost a third are affected. The Committee is shortly to dupe some sixty reels all of which the Selection Committee deem worthy of preservation.

Amongst recent acquisitions for preservation are a complete set of the March of Time series, 7th year; the Gordon Bennett Race, 1904; 5 British Council films; and seven important gifts from R.K.O. which include *Citizen Kane*, *Suspicion* and the *Little Foxes*.

Belfast Film Institute Society

The Belfast Film Institute Society starts its new season in October in a fairly sound position and with a high standard of repertory shows to keep up.

Films in prospect for the coming season include *Alexander Nevski*, *The Blue Angel*, *Nanook*, and *My Universities*, and one or two French films which distributors do not at present appear eager to release to this part of the United Kingdom.

The Society's Monthly Bulletin of Reviews of film releases will resume publication in October. Interested visitors to Northern Ireland are invited to get into touch with the Hon. Secretary, Mr. A. Arnold, 6 College Green House, Belfast.

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Merseyside Film Institute Society

The Annual General Meeting of the Merseyside Film Institute Society was held on August 4th, 1943, when a report on the past year's activities was made. During the period under review 122 new members had been enrolled and the membership is now 440. The Rt. Hon. Viscount Leverhulme, D.L., was re-elected President of the Society and all the officers were re-elected with the exception of the Hon. Assistant Secretary, who had removed to South Africa and consequently resigned. Mr. Allen Batty was elected to this position.

The new season started on October 8th, when the French film *L'esclave Blanche* was shown at the Philharmonic Hall and further monthly shows have been arranged. The films chosen for November and December are *My Universities* (Russia) and *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (Germany) respectively.

Film Council of the South-West

The external work of the Film Council was not marked by any noteworthy development in the Summer but the internal aspect, i.e. the Lectureship in Visual Education in the University College of the South-West, has taken a new step forward. The opening of the Autumn term

brings the appointment of a research assistant and this increase in personnel will make it possible to execute several plans conceived many months ago.

In addition to all this our external contacts have been multiplied and the first step has been taken in the satisfaction of an increasing demand from outside the education world for a Visual Education course for specialists in advertising Public Relations and propaganda. The application of Visual Education to Health Propaganda has also received attention. Lectures and film shows on this topic have been provided. An article in the *Journal of Health Education* for July on "Visual Education in the War for Health" shows the general approach. The survey of educational films, begun some months ago but held up by illness, is now being resumed and may be the subject of a later article. A course of public lectures on the "Language of the Film" has had a lively and successful start.

Chester Film Society

The Chester Film Society has just completed a trial season of four performances, held during the summer months. The object was to find out whether Chester wanted a Society, and whether it could be run under war conditions. There was very little advertising, as we did not

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Edinburgh Film Guild

As a mid-season activity Edinburgh Film Guild whose new offices are at 21 Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2, arranged an Exhibition on Film Décor in the National Gallery of Scotland. It was the first time a film exhibition had been held in the Gallery, which it shared with a Greek National Exhibition, and the attendance was over 30,000.

As a preliminary to the opening of the new season, a performance of scientific films was given under the joint auspices of the Guild and the British Council on October 3rd when initial steps for the formation of an Edinburgh Scientific Film Society were taken.

The season opened on October 17th with a programme including *Le Bonheur*, *High Over the Borders* (National Film Board of Canada), *Common Cause* (M.O.I.) and George Pal's *Western Daze*. Feature films booked for the first half of the season are *My Universities* (October 31st), *Burgtheater* (November 28th) and *Dèrrière la Facade* (December 12th).

Manchester Film Institute Society

The joint sessions which have been arranged during the past two years in conjunction with the Manchester and Salford Film Society have now been terminated.

Activities were suspended during July and August, and our new autumn syllabus of 35 mm. and 16 mm. film shows and discussions will be issued shortly. In the meantime our season opened on September 25th, with a programme of the feature *Les Bas-fonds*, based upon Gorki's play "Lower Depths", with *Papageno* and *Danger Area*, a recent M.O.I. Documentary of the Industrial Front.

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